

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KINGST 04533 081658Z
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O 131336Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0000

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STADIS//////////

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM SENT ACTION IMMEDIATE TO SANTO DOMINGO
052035Z JUN 78, HW REPEATED URSTATION:

QUOTE

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STADIS

FOR AMBASSADOR YOST FROM AMBASSADOR IRVING

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:

SUBJECT: IAPA COMPLAINT AGAINST AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

1. I AM QUOTING IN FULL BELOW A COPY OF A LETTER WHICH
WAS SENT TO ME THIS AFTERNOON BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
CARIBBEAN PUBLISHING AND BROADCASTING ASSOCIATION, OLIVER
CLARKE, WHO ALSO IS MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE JAMAICAN
DAILY GLEANER, THE LARGEST AND OLDEST INDEPENDENT
NEWSPAPER HERE. CLARKE IS PRO-U.S. AND A FRIEND. HE FEELS
BOTH AS PRESIDENT OF CPBA AND A NEWSPAPERMAN HE CANNOT IGNORE
THIS LETTER. HE HAS ASKED FOR MY COMMENTS WHICH HE MIGHT
WANT ALSO TO PRINT. YOUR URGENT ADVICE REQUESTED.

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2. LETTER IS FROM JAMES B. CANEL, DATED MAY 31, 1978 AND
ADDRESSED, IN CIRCULAR FASHION, TO U.S. MEMBERS, THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE CPBA.
BERMAN ORNES, WHO IS IN A DOMINICAN HOSPITAL
RECOVERING FROM MAJOR SURGERY, HAS ASKED ME TO
INFORM YOU THAT HIS NEWSPAPER, EL CARIBE, WAS SUBJECTED

TO CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE BY THE U.S. EMBASSY IN
SANTO DOMINGO DURING THE UNCERTAIN DAYS FOLLOWING THE
MAY 16 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.

YOU WILL RECALL THAT ELEMENTS OF THE ARMY, APPARENTLY
WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF PRESIDENT BALAGUER, SEIZED THE
BALLOT BOXES WHEN THE OPPOSITION LEADER, GUZMAN, APPEARED
TO BE WINNING, AND RUMORS WERE RIFE ABOUT A COUP D'ETAT.
(THE COUP DID NOT DEVELOP AND GUZMAN EVENTUALLY WON THE
ELECTION).

WHILE TENSION AND UNCERTAINTY REIGNED, AN EMBASSY
REPRESENTATIVE VISITED EL CARIBE AND OTHER NEWSPAPERS TO
WARN THAT GRAVE CONSEQUENCES WOULD ENSUE IF THE RESULTS
OF THE ELECTION WERE NOT RESPECTED. THE EMBASSY MAN
SUGGESTED THAT EL CARIBE RUN AN EDITORIAL OF SUPPORT.
GERMAN, WHO WAS ALREADY IN THE HOSPITAL, SAID HIS SON,
ANTONIO, REPLIED THAT HE WAS A NEWSPAPERMAN AND NOT A
POLITICIAN. EL CARIBE DID NOT RUN AN EDITORIAL. LISTIN
DIARIO, ON THE OTHER HAND, DID RUN AN EDITORIAL "BEGGING
THE ARMY ON BENDED KNEE" TO REFRAIN FROM TAKING OVER.
EL CARIBE, HOWEVER, DID RUN AN EDITORIAL CRITICAL
OF U.S. INTERFERENCE IN DOMINICAN AFFAIRS AND THE IMPLIED
THREAT IN A STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT CARTER ON WHAT
MIGHT HAPPEN IF THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION WERE
NOT RESPECTED. PRESIDENT BALAGUER WAS ALSO CRITICAL
OF THE U.S. POSITION IN A SPEECH IN WHICH HE GAVE
ASSURANCES THAT THE PRESIDENCY WOULD BE HANDED OVER
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TO THE WINNER. A SPOKESMAN OF THE ARMED FORCES ALSO
ISSUED ASSURANCES THAT A COUP WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE.

THAT SAME DAY THE EMBASSY PRESS OFFICER CALLED ON
GERMAN TO TELL HIM THAT THE ASSURANCES OF THE ARMED
FORCES DID NOT SATISFY THE STATE DEPARTMENT. HE ASKED
IF GERMAN WAS NOT PLANNING TO RUN AN EDITORIAL.
GERMAN REPLIED THAT HE WAS NOT.

THE PRESS OFFICER SAID THE PRESTIGE AND SECURITY
OF THE COUNTRY WERE IN DANGER. ORNES REPLIED THAT WHAT
WAS REALLY IN DANGER WAS THE PRESTIGE OF THE U.S.
BECAUSE OF THE THREATS MADE BY PRESIDENT CARTER. HE
SAID SUCH BLATANT INTERVENTION IS UNACCEPTABLE.

AS A RESULT OF ALL THIS, GERMAN REPORTS, HIS RELATIONS
WITH THE EMBASSY HAVE BEEN BROKEN.

SUBSEQUENTLY, ON MAY 28, A FRIENDLY U.S. CORRESPONDENT
VISITED ANTONIO ORNES AT THE PAPER AND TOLD HIM TO BE
CAREFUL BECAUSE HE HAD INFORMATION THAT THE U.S.
EMBASSY WAS OUT TO "GET" GERMAN AND EL CARIBE,

THAT GERMAN WOULD BE "DISCREDITED AND DESTROYED" IN THE IAPA. GERMAN ASSUMES THE CORRESPONDENT HEARD THIS FROM EMBASSY PEOPLE.

THE EMBASSY IS HEADED BY NEWLY APPOINTED AMBASSADOR ROBERT YOST. PHILLIP AXELROD, THE SECOND IN COMMAND, IS THE ONE WHO URGED GERMAN TO EDITORIALIZE. THE PRESS OFFICER WHO VISITED NEWSPAPERS IS H.BELL. END QUOTE.
IRVING UNQUOTE

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